

## **Overview Information**

**Federal Agency Name:** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of International Affairs

**Funding Opportunity Title:** Community-Based Urban and Peri-Urban Drinking Water Capacity-Building in Africa

**Announcement Type:** Initial announcement

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:** 66.931 – International Financial Assistance Projects sponsored by EPA's Office of International Affairs

**Dates:** May 5, 2004, deadline for all proposals to be submitted.

All dates listed are by midnight, Eastern Standard Time.

**Overview:** This document is to announce a Request For Initial Proposals (RFIP) through an open competition for EPA funds. The anticipated total award for the three year period of performance is \$500,000. Initial funding is for \$180,000 and additional incremental funding is subject to the availability of funds. These funds will support and enhance efforts in one or more of the following five African countries – Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi, Zambia – to provide scientific, technological and environmental assistance in the provision of safe drinking water in peri-urban/urban areas. The awarding instrument will be a cooperative agreement. There is no cost share or matching requirement for these funds. EPA reserves the right to reject all applicants and make no award from this competition.

## **Full Text**

### **I. Funding Opportunity Description**

Africa has the lowest total water supply and sanitation coverage of any geographic region of the world along with some of the most unstable economies in the world. Each day, over 4,500 Africans - half of them children - die from diarrheal diseases. According to the United Nations, given current rates of population growth, safe water and sanitation services must be increased by nearly 50,000 Africans per day in order to reduce by half the number of people without such services by 2015. With cities facing the largest rates of population growth, the potential for water-related epidemics in urban areas will be particularly heightened. Impediments to progress include lack of capacity to manage water resources, absence of good governance - including regulatory frameworks and institutions for protection of water supplies and recovering costs – and poor mobilization of public and private funds for investment. In 2002, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the US joined other countries in support of the goal to halve the proportion of the world's population without access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

Waterborne diseases caused by lack of safe drinking water and inadequate sanitation has created a health crisis in Africa which contributes to the instability of the struggling economies. In an effort to address this public health crisis, the EPA launched the Water for Africa Program beginning in 2001 which sought to build the capacity of individual communities to better understand and solve their water and sanitation problems at the local level. The initial focus of this work was urban poor communities in Malawi, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. Through pilot projects and workshops, target communities increased their knowledge on issues relevant to improving water and sanitation, strengthened the capacity of community based water groups and increased public involvement in policy-making. These pilot projects have proved fruitful and, under this project, would be enhanced and expanded to broaden partnerships between the communities, the water utilities, government, financial services, and other sectors. This project would also support the U.S. Government's World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Water for the Poor Initiative.

Under this Cooperative Agreement, the selected cooperator will use their experience and knowledge to build upon EPA efforts that began in 2001 in Africa to improve drinking water quality and sanitation conditions in urban poor communities. For more information on the original pilot efforts, go to: <http://www.epa.gov/oia/water/drinkingwater/africa.html>.

Through these pilot projects, EPA demonstrated the elements needed within a community that would enable and empower them to be the recipients of improved drinking water systems, including community water committee organization, stakeholder involvement and hygiene education.

In building upon the original pilot efforts, the selected cooperator may consider conducting workshops, providing technical assistance and/or performing demonstration projects in the areas of water sector improvement, optimization of water utilities, and development of small scale innovative infrastructure financing options.

Private versus public sector involvement in developing water infrastructure, the existence of and role of regulatory agencies, the importance of water associations and capacity within communities to address water problems, are all critical elements of the water sector in Africa. There is no solution that will solve all the problems for everyone on the continent, but the right combination of these elements in each country can pave the road for sector development. EPA water projects in Africa addressed some of these issues on the community level but not at a country or regional level. The cooperator may consider addressing any one or all of these elements or others, as deemed appropriate, that raise awareness and promote strengthened technical capacity within the water sector.

The provision of **safe** drinking water is as important as the provision of **enough** water. Water treatment facilities throughout Africa, where they exist, tend to have aging infrastructure, be poorly maintained and are inadequate in their ability to serve the entire urban populations, particularly the underserved urban poor. Oftentimes, optimization of treatment facilities can result in performance enhancements that save the utility money. The cooperator may consider working with the utility to improve their ability to provide safe drinking water through cost-

effective measures.

With regard to innovative infrastructure financing, experience shows that hardware – infrastructure - alone does not result in people receiving safe drinking water. Under the initial pilot project, EPA and a cooperator partnered with local NGOs aimed at supporting communities to improve urban drinking water quality management through stakeholder involvement, discussion of water sector reform and development of community-based water committees. Building capacity with the communities ensures the right environment for developing and maintaining infrastructure.

With this in mind, the cooperator may consider the exploration of innovative financing options to allow these organized and well-trained communities to obtain funding to build the necessary infrastructure, e.g. extension of pipes from existing city system to a water kiosk, small drinking water package plants whereas traditionally, they would be reliant on donor contributions that are few and far between.

EPA expects that the grantee will identify other local and international organizations working with the communities in an effort to complement activities where possible and avoid duplication.

Finally, the cooperator should indicate how they plan to measure results from their proposed activities with regard to achieving the core objective of increasing the number of people in urban and peri-urban areas in Africa with access to safe drinking water.

## **II. Award Information**

EPA anticipates one award, for a total amount of \$500,000 and a period of performance of three years. The initial first-year funding is for \$180,000 and additional incremental funding is subject to the availability of funds. EPA anticipates that the start date of this project would be no later than July 2004, and the period of performance would not exceed 12 months.

This award will be funded through a cooperative agreement and will include substantial involvement by EPA. Substantial involvement will include EPA approval of specific phases of the project before the recipient proceeds to the next phase; EPA will approve key personnel; EPA will assist in some of the project activities; EPA will approve the workplan prior to the award agreement; EPA will address deficiencies in performance; EPA will review project results after completion of the work; and EPA will ensure recipient compliance with statutes, regulations, policies and all requirements in the agreement, and review progress reports.

## **III. Eligibility Information**

### **Eligible Applicants**

State governments  
County governments

City or township governments  
Special district governments  
State and Private institutions of higher education  
Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)  
Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education  
Foreign governments  
International nonprofit organizations  
Individuals

### **Cost Sharing or Matching**

There are no cost sharing or matching requirements for this project.

### **Other Eligibility Requirements**

Only one application per submitting entity will be considered.

## **IV. Initial Proposal and Submission Information**

**Step 1-** Submit a proposal not to exceed ten pages, front and back, postmarked by midnight on May 5, 2004, Eastern Standard Time (EST). The information should provide EPA with a profile of the applicant, the purpose and anticipated results of your project, an explanation of how you plan to accomplish your project, and an estimate of the time and money needed to complete your project (see format below). During the review of proposals, EPA may request clarification on submitted information. Proposals that are inconsistent with the program goals or that contain unallowable costs and activities will be screened out of the review process.

### **Proposal Format**

- Proposals should be limited to no more than 10 pages, front and back. Page size should be 8 ½ by 11" with font size of 12 points or larger.
- Narrative of project purpose and environmental results to be achieved by project, including expected project results, how they will be measured and how they are related to environmental improvements.
- Brief description of the applicant organization, experience related to the areas of interest and the organization's infrastructure as it relates to its ability to implement the proposed project.
- Brief description of staffing and funding resources available to implement the proposed project; including the number of workers and staff qualifications (no resumes required).
- Milestone Chart, including expected accomplishments and projected due dates for the expenditure of the initial \$180,000 on activities anticipated to last no longer than 12 months. The same information should also be provided for second and third year activities should additional funds be available.
- Description of how the proposed projects meets the Ranking Criteria specified in

- this announcement.  
Letters of commitment from project partners, if applicable.

Proposals must be postmarked by 12 midnight (EST) on May 5, 2004, (No fax submissions) to:

Cristina Mercurio  
Office of International Affairs  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W. (M.C. 2650R)  
Washington, D.C. 20460-0001

**Step 2 - EPA Notifies Selectee:** After the proposal is selected by EPA, we will notify the selectee within 30 days and request submission of a full grant application. An application package is available at the following web address: <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/contents.htm>

### **Submission Dates and Times**

May 5, 2004, deadline for all proposals to be submitted. Must be postmarked by midnight, EST on May 5, 2004.  
Late applications will not be reviewed or considered for funding.

### **Intergovernmental Review (Required)**

Not applicable

### **Funding Restrictions**

Not applicable

### **Other Submission Requirements**

Once selectee is notified, submission of grant application will be requested.

## **V. Proposal Review Information**

### **Criteria**

EPA will evaluate and rank proposals for funding recommendations using the following criteria (100 points total).

1. Proposal Concept - Proposal demonstrates high potential for sustainability and continuity of previous efforts in addressing community-based urban/peri-urban drinking water issues in Africa. Preference will be given to the proposal that demonstrates the likelihood of improving drinking water for the highest number of people. Preference will also be given to partnership potential in an effort to identify synergies, avoid duplication and leverage resources. Proposal

clearly describes what environmental results plan to be achieved and demonstrates how they will be measured. (50 points)

2. Proposal Methodology - Proposal clearly demonstrates a logical and meritorious method of conducting the work of the proposed project, the partners that will be used, and specific responsibilities of each entity participating in the proposed project. Work describes accomplishment dates that make sense and are achievable. (10 points)

3. Technical Experience - Proposal demonstrates organization has qualified technical capacity for carrying out work. Proposal includes convincing information that the proposer has experience working with water and sanitation issues, preferably in urban areas. (20 points)

4. Proposal Cost-effectiveness - Proposal includes a cost-effective budget to achieve project goals. Work described is achievable with available funding. (10 points)

5. Regional Experience - The proposal should demonstrate that the proposer either has successful experience or the high potential for establishing such experience, in working with African partners on community-based urban/peri-urban drinking water issues in Africa. (10 points)

Maximum score: 100 points

## **Review and Selection Process**

The review and selection of proposals will be conducted by a panel of EPA international assistance and water experts.

Any disputes will be resolved in accordance with 40 CFR Part 31, subpart F.

EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals and to not make any awards.

## **VI. Award Administration Information**

### **Award Notification**

After the deadline for the initial proposals has passed, EPA will acknowledge receipt of proposals by postal mail. Once proposals are reviewed, evaluated and ranked, a final selection will be made. The successful applicant will complete and submit an application for federal assistance. All other applicants will be notified within 30 days after award. The notification will be made electronically via postal service depending on how the application was submitted to EPA.

### **Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

An applicant whose proposal is selected for federal funding must complete and application for

federal assistance, available at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/contents.htm> , prior to award (see 40 CFR 30.12 and 31.10). In addition, the successful applicant will be required to certify that they have not been Debarred or Suspended from participation in federal assistance awards in accordance with 40 CFR 32.

### **Confidentiality**

Applicants must clearly mark information they consider confidential. EPA will make final confidentiality decisions in accordance with Agency Regulations at 40 CFR Part 2, Subpart B.

### **Reporting Requirements**

Quarterly project status reports, a final project report, and final Financial Status Report will be required. Quarterly reports should describe project activities and provide EPA with information about project development and cost. The Financial Status Report must accurately account for federal funds expended and identify appropriate use of federal funds.

### **VII. Agency Contact**

Cristina Mercurio  
Office of International Affairs  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W. (M.C. 2650R)  
Washington, D.C. 20460-0001

Email: [mercurio.cristina@epa.gov](mailto:mercurio.cristina@epa.gov)